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Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Office in Angola

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1294 (2000) of 13 April 2000, by which the Council requested me to submit to it periodic reports on developments in Angola, including recommendations about additional measures the Council might consider to promote the peace process in that country. The present report provides an update of the situation since my report of 10 October 2000 (S/2000/977).

II. Political developments

2. The armed conflict in Angola has continued unabated, leaving much of the country insecure. Guerrilla activities are forcing the population to flee into neighbouring countries and creating serious humanitarian situations. The Government of Angola is reported to be consolidating its military advantage over the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA), led by Jonas Savimbi. While reiterating its determination to pursue the military option, the Government has, however, reaffirmed on several occasions the continuing validity of the Lusaka Protocol.

3. On 10 November 2000, President José Eduardo dos Santos, in his address to the nation on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Angola's independence, announced a general amnesty. He also declared that the war no longer constituted an obstacle to the development of Angola and that his Government would henceforth ensure a more rational use of oil revenue to improve the socio-economic conditions of the population. The President subsequently announced the establishment of the Fund for Peace and National Reconciliation, intended to facilitate the social reintegration of all those who abandon war. On New Year's Eve, he also indicated that general elections would be held in the country during the second half of 2002 provided that there is security, a new constitution, a new electoral law and the displaced population is resettled to permit an electoral census.

4. UNITA reacted negatively to the amnesty proclamation and vowed to prevent the elections from taking place. On 13 November 2000, its secretary-general stated that, apart from the fact that the amnesty per se would not resolve the Angolan conflict, the Government also had no legitimacy to grant it. Some opposition

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political parties represented in the Angolan National Assembly, as well as individual UNITA parliamentarians, also agreed that in addition to amnesty there is a need to address the root causes of the conflict.

5. Despite the scepticism from some opposition parties, the Government has continued to report that since the adoption of the Amnesty law, several former soldiers of UNITA and those of the Frente para a Libertação do Enclave de Cabinda (FLEC) have taken advantage of the law and benefited from the Fund for Peace and National Reconciliation. In this connection, President dos Santos recently stated that from an estimated strength of 40,000 fighters, only 8,000 or so remained loyal to UNITA.

6. On 15 March 2001, the Government announced a four-point plan for the completion of the peace process. Speaking during a press conference, the Angolan Minister of Interior, who coordinates the Inter-Sectoral Commission for Peace and National Reconciliation, underlined the need for a unilateral and unconditional cessation of hostilities on the part of Mr. Savimbi's UNITA. He also called on the rebel movement to hand over its weapons to the United Nations, conclude the tasks pending under the Lusaka Protocol and participate in the general elections. The Minister further called on UNITA to resolve its internal problems, and stated that if Mr. Savimbi presented himself to the authorities while the amnesty law was still in force, his crimes would be pardoned and no judicial action would be taken against him.

7. A two-day forum on the consequences of the war in Angola was organized in Luanda by a non-governmental organization, Open Society, on 14 and 15 March. The participants, mainly civil society groups and others from all walks of life, including members of the ruling party and opposition groups as well as the church, called for an immediate cessation of hostilities and a peaceful resolution of the conflict. They subsequently signed a petition addressed to President dos Santos, Mr. Savimbi and myself in this regard. Some opposition political parties presented a protest letter to the Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Angola on 20 March expressing objection to the sale of armaments to Angola.

8. Officials of FLEC have continued to call for negotiations with the Governments of Angola and Portugal, both for the right of the people of the Cabinda enclave to self-determination and the release of seven Portuguese nationals taken hostage on 24 May 2000 and 9 March 2001. Angolan authorities have been reported to be making contacts with the various separatist movements of Cabinda province, aimed at initiating discussions on how to resolve the concerns of the population of the enclave.

9. Relations between Angola and Zambia have improved in recent weeks. In the past, they had deteriorated due to the military offensive of the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) in the eastern region, along the border between the two countries, resulting in an influx of refugees including some UNITA elements into Zambia. On 10 February 2001, Presidents Frederick Chiluba and Sam Nujoma attended a mini-summit with President dos Santos in Luanda and discussed border security issues. The three leaders agreed to set up a tripartite security mechanism to prevent both the illegal circulation of people and goods and the unlawful trade in diamonds and ivory, as well as illicit arms trafficking. UNITA warned Zambia of unpredictable retaliatory consequences if FAA were allowed to operate from inside Zambia to attack UNITA bases in Angola.

10. The Government took steps to improve its relations with Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso. The Foreign Minister of Côte d'Ivoire paid a two-day official visit to Angola on 8 and 9 February during which he was received by President dos Santos and also met several senior Government officials. The Minister expressed the determination of his Government to implement Security Council sanctions against UNITA. The Speaker of the Angolan National Assembly made a four-day official visit to Burkina Faso from 5 to 9 March at the invitation of his Burkinabé counterpart. He addressed the Parliament and discussed with the President of the country the need to respect Security Council sanctions against UNITA and the alleged support given by Burkina Faso to Mr. Savimbi as well as the need to improve relations between the two countries.

11. Breaking a long period of silence, Mr. Savimbi granted an interview to *Voice of America* on 22 March, during which he talked about the peace process, the Lusaka Protocol, the Government's Amnesty law, the Fund for Peace and National Reconciliation and the disarmament of UNITA. Referring to the peace process, Mr. Savimbi stated that his movement was ready for a dialogue, which should also include members of civil society. He affirmed that without such a dialogue there would be no elections and no peace in Angola. He reiterated the validity of the Lusaka Protocol, and noted that both parties still had to conclude the implementation of some of its key provisions. He expressed doubts on the sincerity of the Government in granting him amnesty and concurred with those who said that the law per se would not resolve the root causes of the Angolan conflict. He questioned the purpose for which the Fund for Peace and National Reconciliation had been created, arguing that the money ought to have been used for alleviating the sufferings of the population instead of its intended purpose of enticing UNITA supporters to abandon the movement. Finally, he indicated that UNITA had no objections to the disarmament but would like to discuss beforehand its modalities.

12. Members of the sanctions-monitoring mechanism established under Security Council resolution 1295 (2000) visited Angola in November 2000 and again in February 2001. They met with several senior Government and State corporation officials, including some former UNITA generals, as well as members of the diplomatic community. As confirmed by the Government of Angola (S/2001/123), the sanctions seem to have contributed to efforts aimed at eroding the military capability of UNITA. However, there are worrying indications that some unidentified planes have been violating Angola's air space in the Cuando Cubango province to deliver supplies to UNITA, and that representatives of UNITA continue to raise funds through the illicit sale of diamonds.

13. In late March, the Chairman of the Sanctions Committee against UNITA, Ambassador Richard Ryan (Ireland) paid a familiarization visit to Angola and met with President dos Santos and senior Government officials and other dignitaries. He stated that all Member States have an obligation to implement the resolutions adopted by the Security Council against UNITA. He also noted that the sanctions regime was working since UNITA's access to diamond-producing areas has been curtailed, and added that relations between the United Nations and the Government have improved.

14. My representative in Angola and head of the United Nations Office in Angola (UNOA), Mussagy Jeichande, was received by President dos Santos and has met on several occasions with the Minister of External Relations, who reaffirmed the

continuing validity of the Lusaka Protocol and called on UNOA to seek the completion of its implementation. My representative has also maintained contacts with members of the opposition parties and other civil society groups.

15. The security situation throughout the country has remained tense during the period under review. Government troops are reported to be pursuing the residual forces of UNITA and are taking control of the municipalities under the control of the rebel movement. It has been reported that UNITA soldiers have been deserting in large numbers, taking advantage of the amnesty law.

16. Nevertheless, with the continuation of its guerrilla activities, UNITA still has the capacity to attack positions under Government control, such as the city of Uige and the FAA command post in the locality of Catumbela. UNITA is also reportedly still in control of some localities near the north and north-eastern borders of Angola with the Democratic Republic of the Congo and is said to be enjoying safe havens in the Malange and Cuango basins.

III. Human rights aspects

17. The human rights situation continued to be undermined by the direct consequences of the ongoing conflict and structural weaknesses in government and state institutions devoted to protecting human rights and the rule of law. Civilians, in particular villagers and farmers, are often victims of serious and recurring human rights abuses. UNITA's systematic attacks on civilian targets have continued. Alleged human rights violations by Government security forces often appeared to be perpetrated by individuals or groups of soldiers or policemen acting outside the parameters of the official code of conduct and discipline.

18. Government authorities still face structural problems, such as inadequate human and material resources, that affect law enforcement and human rights protection. The overall justice system is weak and ineffectual in many parts of the country, particularly in rural areas, where many conflict-related violations occur. The prison system's lack of adequate resources often aggravate the conditions of detention. Pre-trial detention beyond periods established by law continues to be a problem. In this regard, the application of the amnesty law adopted by the National Assembly on 29 November 2000 has resulted in a decrease in prison population, including those under preventive detention held beyond the legally allowed detention terms. There are efforts to improve the human rights situation and overcome those structural weaknesses. The inauguration of a Municipal Court in Viana, Luanda province, the rehabilitation work started for other municipal courts or planned with the support of the United Nations and the ongoing construction of new prisons are all encouraging examples.

19. Freedom of expression and opinion, including the right to peacefully assemble, continued to be affected by the climate of instability generated by the ongoing war. However, despite some attempts to stifle their activities, particularly in the provinces, opposition parties have been forceful in exercising their rights, and the media have increased the space for public expression and information flow. Angolan radio and newspapers are covering more human rights issues and have broadcast debates on governance performances and democratic principles.

20. Social and economic rights remained a serious problem in Angola. Several demonstrations demanding respect for basic social and economic rights and the equitable distribution of wealth took place during the period under review. Despite recent initiatives, there is still a gap between Angola's substantial revenues and the funds allocated to improving the living conditions of the population. A larger effort is needed from the Government, with the support of the international community, to provide for more basic rights and develop a stronger strategy against poverty in Angola.

21. Through its constructive partnerships with Government authorities and civil society at the local and national levels, the Human Rights Division of UNOA is actively helping to create sustainable mechanisms and processes that contribute to enabling institutions to protect human rights and for Angolans to know and exercise them. These partnerships involve various activities and projects that are almost exclusively funded through voluntary contributions. They include infrastructure support and semi-regular training for government and civil society partners, such as capacity-building with the Ministry of External Relations to produce reports for human rights treaty bodies, computerization and case-tracking systems with the Office of the Prosecutor General and rehabilitation of municipal courts. FAA, the police and the penitentiary system continued to implement the programmes conceived to raise their personnel's awareness of international human rights and humanitarian standards, strengthen their capacity to respond to violations and bolster the rule of law throughout the country. Other projects related to human rights awareness and protection include a dynamic network of human rights counsellors and emergency legal aid that is being implemented in more provinces, support for public interest litigation, legal interns in police stations, weekly human rights radio programmes and weekly human rights articles in newspapers. Current funding arrangements for the implementation of those projects are entirely dependent on the availability of extrabudgetary resources. It is therefore hoped that a growing percentage of UNOA's human rights capacity-building activities can be funded from the regular budget in order to ensure their proper planning and implementation.

22. The implementation of the Human Rights Division's projects is leading to a gradual integration of human rights issues into the work of the United Nations system and NGOs in Angola. There is closer coordination with United Nations agencies through the development of projects, such as the rehabilitation of municipal courts or joint protection strategies for all citizens, including vulnerable groups. The situation of close to three million displaced persons remains a serious human rights concern that needs to be addressed by all. The human rights needs of internally displaced persons are wide-ranging. The lack of legal documentation following displacement poses a very serious problem. Everything from health services to registration of children, schooling and even legal assistance depend on its possession. In this regard, the United Nations protection strategy for internally displaced persons is one of the important steps taken by the United Nations and several NGOs towards strengthening the protection of the full spectrum of human rights of internally displaced persons under international human rights and humanitarian laws and national law, as outlined in the United Nations guideline principles on internally displaced persons. The Human Rights Division is currently involved in the capacity-building and community empowerment efforts of the strategy. It has been recently called upon by the United Nations, especially the Inter-

Agency Network on Internal Displacement, which visited Angola in March 2001, to also play a more active role especially related to advocacy throughout the country.

23. The Government has expressly asked UNOA to continue its efforts and to extend its activities to all provinces. These activities ensure that human rights, good governance and improvement of justice delivery at all levels are well integrated within the priorities and strategies for peace, national reconciliation and social change in Angola. During the period under review, the Human Rights Division started, in accordance with the request and consent of the Government, the process of opening offices staffed by Angolan nationals as human rights officers in the capital cities of various provinces. The expansion to the provinces will help to prepare for a transition from war to peace, through advocating and strengthening the promotion and protection of rights, the protection of all citizens and delivery of justice throughout the country. In view of the forthcoming general elections, it will also contribute to building space to advocate free and participatory elections, including in areas recently captured from UNITA.

IV. Humanitarian situation

24. By the end of February 2001, the number of persons reportedly displaced since the resumption of hostilities in January 1998 reached 2.86 million. Of that number, 2.22 million internally displaced persons reportedly live in areas accessible to humanitarian agencies and 1.13 million of them have been confirmed by humanitarian organizations. Positive advances in the registration of internally displaced persons for humanitarian assistance were made during the reporting period. In January 2000, a targeting and registration working group composed of representatives of United Nations agencies and NGOs was established under the leadership of the World Food Programme (WFP). The working group agreed on new registration procedures and designed improved documentation. In provinces where massive influxes of displaced populations occurred during or after the agricultural campaign or where internally displaced persons were not registered in time to receive agricultural inputs, the new registration system will be extended. In a positive step forward, registration and verification under the new system will be conducted as soon as displaced populations arrive, and a new standardized registration card will be used countrywide.

25. During the period under review, increases in cases of malaria, respiratory infections and diarrhoea were reported, particularly in February, when seasonal rains began throughout the country. The nutrition situation stabilized in many regions of the country despite the onset of seasonal rains, when malnutrition rates typically increase. Attendance rates in therapeutic and supplementary feeding centres dropped in the hard-hit provinces of Malanje and Uige.

26. The intensification of guerrilla and counter-insurgency activity has made protection an urgent priority. A key component of the United Nations protection strategy is the training of State and non-state actors at the provincial level on the norms for the resettlement of displaced populations and the United Nations guiding principles on displacement. Beginning in December 2000, provincial workshops have been held in five provinces and will be conducted in the remaining 13 provinces by the end of June. The aim of the workshops is to produce a realistic

provincial protection plan that establishes a framework for future actions by both state and non-state actors.

27. The decree on norms on the resettlement of internally displaced populations was officially published by the Government of Angola on 5 January 2001. In late February 2001, a technical working group was formed under the leadership of the Ministry for Assistance and Social Resettlement to develop standard operating procedures for implementation of the norms. The aim of the technical working group, which includes 11 government ministries and departments, United Nations agencies and NGOs, is to produce a set of legally binding procedures that guarantee the standardized application of the norms countrywide and identify benchmarks for monitoring the resettlement process.

28. Significant efforts to resettle displaced populations in safe areas has continued. By the end of February, humanitarian organizations confirmed that 316,000 internally displaced persons had been resettled in temporary areas in three provinces. During the same period, limited return movements continued to occur in areas where humanitarian organizations have access, including Huila and Moxico provinces. Large-scale return, however, remained limited due to persistent insecurity throughout the country.

29. As part of ongoing efforts to close all poorly managed transit centres, humanitarian partners worked closely with the Government to resettle populations from several transit centres in Benguela, Huambo, Huila and Moxico provinces. Although 25 transit centres have been closed since April 2000, more than 20,000 persons continue to live in 14 centres in Benguela, Huambo, Huila, Luanda, Malanje and Moxico.

30. The drought conditions experienced during December and January were relieved by the onset of seasonal rains in February. Compared to previous agricultural campaigns, significant progress has been made this year in land allocations to displaced populations. As a result, families have greater opportunities for engaging in agricultural activities and may be able to improve their coping mechanisms.

31. Between January and March, WFP planned to distribute 46,343 tons of food to 993,331 beneficiaries in 17 provinces. In addition, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) distributed 2,500 tons to 300,000 displaced and at-risk persons in Huambo province but will reduce its caseload to approximately 28,000 internally displaced persons in Huambo resettlement areas in April. Based on the recommendations of the vulnerability assessment conducted in January, WFP plans to provide food assistance to 800,000 at-risk people after the harvest. Due to a lack of funding, the WFP food pipeline, including maize and pulses, is facing a shortfall for the month of April.

32. In a major effort to expand the humanitarian operation, eight assessments were undertaken in five provinces in February and early March. The United Nations has identified more than 70 sites for future security and technical needs assessments. The majority of the proposed sites still have small security perimeters, limiting free movement, trade, agriculture and resettlement and raising serious concerns about the sustainability of future humanitarian operations.

33. In an effort to ensure that humanitarian assistance activities are integrated across sectors, a new information format for key humanitarian indicators was

introduced by the Technical Unit for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in January. The new format, which covers a wide range of humanitarian sectors (health, nutrition, displacement, resettlement, NGO presence etc.), will be used to compile information from all provinces on a monthly basis. This information will be presented to key policy makers, including vice-ministers, heads of agencies and ambassadors, who attend the monthly humanitarian coordination group. Co-chaired by the Minister for Assistance and Social Resettlement and the United Nations humanitarian coordinator, the format will also be used to monitor the benchmarks identified in the 2001 Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal and to adjust the overall humanitarian operation at both the national and provincial levels.

34. The Senior Inter-Agency Network on Internal Displacement, led by the United Nations Special Coordinator on Internal Displacement, together with representatives of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), WFP, the Office of the Representative of the Secretary-General for Internally Displaced Persons and the NGO community, undertook a mission to Angola from 12 to 17 March. The main objectives of the mission were to assess the nature and magnitude of the assistance and protection needs of internally displaced persons and review the operational capacity of humanitarian actors. The mission also looked at progress made in implementing the recommendations of Francis Deng, Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons, following his visit to Angola in November 2000. The mission, which met with the Government and a broad cross-section of humanitarian partners and visited locations for internally displaced persons in the provinces, expressed concern over allegations of human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law, including forced relocation, targeting of civilians in the conflict, forced conscription, looting of humanitarian supplies and sexual violence.

Child protection

35. The situation of children in Angola continues to be of serious concern. Although child advocacy NGOs and United Nations agencies have increased their emphasis on child protection, children are still bearing the brunt of the consequences of the ongoing conflict. A total of 176,000 children under age five died in Angola during 2000, and UNICEF's *2001 Report on the World Situation of Infants* ranks Angola's infant death rate as the second worst in the world.

36. There are numerous allegations of abuses of children's rights, including breaches of international humanitarian law. Many children are subject to kidnapping and forced recruitment and are used as soldiers in the ongoing conflict. They are killed in deliberate or indiscriminate attacks against their villages. Children separated from their families, in particular following attacks and/or displacement, are of serious concern. Children who lack legal documentation, particularly those who have been forcibly displaced, suffer a lack of access to health services, schooling and even legal assistance when attempting to seek redress for violations of their rights. The numerous street children also face daily various hardships and dangers. Children are exploited as labourers and are subjected to sexual violence. Their lack of documentation leads to constant harassment by police officers. They are easy and silent targets for abuse. The rising costs of education, coupled with complex social and economic factors, limit access to education. At the national

level, less than half of all children currently attend school, and in Luanda more than 60,000 children are out of the school system.

V. Socio-economic situation

37. During the period under review, most donors have shown a readiness to step up their cooperation with Angola and accompany national efforts to reform the economy and reduce poverty. Lenders, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the African Development Bank, have intensified visits and missions in order to prepare the framework for new loans operations. Priority sectors considered for investments include public works, water systems, health, education, energy, fisheries and agriculture, as well as economic management.

38. However, the success of these initiatives towards re-engagement will depend on the successful implementation of the IMF staff-monitored programme and its transformation into a poverty reduction growth facility, the new IMF funding instrument for developing countries. The staff monitored programme has already been extended by a period of six months up to June 2001 because of the slow implementation rate observed, both in its macroeconomic component and on the structural measures.

39. The Government is showing greater determination to end fiscal and monetary imbalances and stabilize the economy while increasing the allocation of public resources to social sectors, as evidenced in the 2001 budget adopted recently. To that end, some significant progress has been made in the stabilization of the exchange rate during the first quarter of 2001, considering that the national currency has so far depreciated against the United States dollar by only 5 per cent during this period, compared with the 50 per cent depreciation observed during the past four years.

40. In March 2001, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) completed a review of its programme activities in Angola from 1997 to 2000, following a three-week independent review mission conducted in October/November 2000. The review revealed progress in a number of areas, including administrative reform and state modernization at the central level, capacity-building within national institutions for humanitarian coordination and community empowerment to promote participatory local development in selected provinces, with special emphasis on youth and women. The review also noted the enormous difficulties faced by the programme since the resumption of the war at the end of 1998, and the negative impact of the security and humanitarian situation on longer-term development activities.

41. As a follow-up to the review, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has initiated discussions with the Government on the formulation of a new country cooperation framework for 2002-2003. The main areas of intervention will continue to be: (a) assistance to post-conflict development activities, such as mine action and integration of demobilized combatants, and (b) poverty reduction through the strengthening of related monitoring systems and through community rehabilitation and empowerment, and (c) promotion of good governance through improved economic management, state modernization and institutional reforms. Significant support is also envisaged to help support the fight against HIV/AIDS as a follow-up to ongoing UNDP surveys in this area conducted in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

and to strengthen environmental protection through the 10-year review process of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

42. During the period under review, UNDP also continued its collaborative efforts with the World Bank and IMF to support the preparation of the national poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP), whose finalization is one of the key targets of the IMF staff-monitored programme. The first draft of the interim PRSP was issued by the Government in March 2000 and shared with various development partners for comments. UNDP has been facilitating coordination within the donor community and the United Nations system to support the PRSP process, and the Government has now decided to integrate the United Nations system into its inter-ministerial PRSP working group. A wide-ranging consultative process to discuss the PRSP strategies will be launched with UNDP and World Bank support in April 2001, with the participation of the donor community.

43. The Government accepted in February 2001 a joint UNDP/World Bank proposal to organize a symposium in May 2001 on the role of community empowerment strategies in poverty reduction. UNDP is leading the preparations for this symposium process, in collaboration with the European Union. The results are expected to feed into the process of identifying appropriate poverty reduction strategies within the framework of the PRSP.

44. UNDP activities also continued in the area of mine action but on a much-reduced scale due to financial difficulties. The Government is currently reviewing its mine action strategy, with donor support and technical support from UNDP. To this end, existing institutions are currently being reviewed to ensure much needed Government support to demining and promotion of mine awareness among the population, as well as to promote the Ottawa process.

45. The United Nations development agencies have also continued their efforts to improve programme quality, better coordination and improved integration within the framework of the Secretary-General's reform programme. Consensus has been reached on transforming, in the medium-term, the current UNDP premises into a United Nations house, and to proceed immediately with the formulation of a United Nations strategy paper along the lines of the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, without launching a formal process. This limited approach takes into account the total immersion of all development partners in the PRSP process and the need for the United Nations system to focus in a more proactive manner on its core advocacy and humanitarian functions. In this same vein, the in-country United Nations Development Group agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, WFP and the United Nations Population Fund) reached consensus in December 2000 on harmonizing their programme cycles in Angola, with effect from 2004.

VI. Observations

46. Since my last report, the Government of Angola has taken some positive measures that will further enhance efforts towards peace and reconciliation in the country. They include reaffirmation of the Lusaka Protocol as the only valid instrument for peace in Angola; the announcement of national elections for late 2002; the promulgation of the amnesty law and the creation of the Fund for Peace and National Reconciliation to support those benefiting from amnesty. I also

welcome the Government's willingness to recognize the need to ensure respect for human rights and its readiness to develop, in cooperation with the United Nations, institutional capacity in this important area.

47. However, despite growing pressure from civil society for a political settlement of the conflict, fighting is continuing in many parts of Angola. As a result, the humanitarian situation remains serious. It is imperative that UNITA abandon its military option and seek a resolution of the conflict in the context of the Lusaka Protocol. I reiterate my appeal to all concerned to facilitate the delivery of emergency relief assistance. As I have done in the past, I urge the donor community to respond as generously as possible to this year's United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Angola. I also encourage the international community to support efforts to provide basic services, such as education, health and a functioning judiciary, to the areas formerly occupied by UNITA.

48. In the field of human rights, references to commonly held human rights standards, good governance, democratic principles and the rule of law are becoming a mainstay of political discourse and debate by high-level authorities and institutions as well as in civil society at large. Government authorities, as well as some civil society actors and the international community, are becoming more involved in activities to improve the human rights situation in Angola as a means to help bring peace and national reconciliation to the country.

49. There are encouraging signs of a nascent democratic process involving broad segments of Angolans, including civil society, on the need for the drafting of a new Constitution, the debate over a new press law and on the need to ensure free and fair elections in late 2002. I have asked my Adviser for Special Assignments in Africa, Under-Secretary-General Ibrahim Gambari, to continue his consultations with the Government of Angola and Member States on how best the United Nations can help accelerate the process of peace in the country. Mr. Gambari will be visiting Angola in early May to discuss these matters with the Government and others.

50. UNOA, despite the limitations on its resources, will continue to try to make a contribution to these efforts. UNOA will also continue to play an essential role in reporting on political and related developments in the country and in providing assistance to the Government and people of Angola in the area of human rights and capacity-building. I therefore recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of UNOA for a further six-month period until 15 October 2001.